

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

The present invention provides a laminated retardation optical element that never lowers contrast and thus never degrades display performance even when placed between a liquid crystal cell and a $\lambda/4$ retardation film. In a liquid crystal display 90, a laminated retardation optical element 10 is placed between a polarizer 102A on the incident side and a liquid crystal cell 104, and a $\lambda/4$ retardation film 102C is placed between a polarizer 102B on the emergent side and the liquid crystal cell 104. The laminated retardation optical element 10 comprises: a $\lambda/4$ retardation layer 14 having the function of bringing, to light that passes through this retardation layer, a phase difference corresponding to a quarter of the wavelength of the light; and a C plate-type retardation layer 16 that acts as a negative C plate. The $\lambda/4$ retardation layer 14 and the C plate-type retardation layer 16 are laminated to a transparent substrate 12 in the order mentioned, and are optically bonded to each other. The $\lambda/4$ retardation layer 14 comprises as its main component a horizontally-aligned, cross-linked nematic liquid crystal, while the C plate-type retardation layer 16 comprises as its main component a cross-linked chiral nematic liquid crystal (a cross-linked nematic liquid crystal and a cross-linked chiral agent) or cross-linked discotic liquid crystal.